

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/784,610

Examiner

Charlie Peng

Applicant(s)

KEENUM ET AL.

Art Unit

2883

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed on 8 February 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1 and 4-27.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 23 February 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 20050216.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1 and 4-27 are allowed. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 2 and 3 are cancelled, and claim 1 was amended by the applicant to include the limitations of cancelled claim 3. Claim 10 was amended to correct a typographic error. U.S. Patent 6,759,014 to Melton et al. teaches, in one embodiment, a universal fiber optic receptacle having an adapter sleeve for receiving and aligning a plurality of connector types through opposed first and second ends. The universal fiber optic receptacle also has an adapter retainer capable of being disconnected threadably from a receptacle housing (or an NID). However, the adapter causes the receptacle to be, partly, both inside and outside of the NID enclosure (as defined by external walls of the NID). Furthermore, Melton et al. do not teach the optical connection, by the optical receptacle, of a connectorized optical fiber to a pre-connectorized fiber optic drop-cable. (Optical fibers are "connectorized" to permit the optical fiber connections to be subsequently reconfigured without the optical fibers having to be first separated, then cleaned and polished, and then re-spliced to other optical fibers. The optical fibers may also be connectorized at the time of manufacture, such optical fibers are referred to as "pre-connectorized".)

The examiner finds no obvious motivation to combine other prior art with Melton et al. to form the invention as disclosed by the applicants. It is the examiner's opinion

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that the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious in combination with the rest of the limitations of the base claim.

Claims 5, 13, and 19 remain unchanged in merits other than typographic corrections. Claims 5, 13, and 19 thus remain allowed for the same reasons as previously stated in the first Office Action.

Claims 26 and 27 are allowed as amended (see Examiner's Amendment). U.S. Patent 6,721,484 to Blankenship et al. teach a fiber optic NID (10) with an interior cavity defined by a base (12) and a lockable cover (14). Blankenship further teaches an entry port (26) that permits fiber optic cables to be routed into the NID, and a plurality of adapters (67) that join feeder cables and distribution cables. However, Blankenship does not teach an optical fiber connector receptacle for connecting a connectorized optical fiber to a pre-connectorized fiber optic drop cable. The examiner finds no obvious motivation to combine other prior art with Melton et al. to form an invention as disclosed by the applicants. It is the examiner's opinion that the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious in combination with the rest of the limitations of the base claim.

Claims 4, 6-9, 11, 12, 14-18, and 20-25 are allowed by virtue of being dependent claims of allowed base claims.

Other prior art considered includes:

- I. U.S. Patent 6,815,612 to Bloodworth et al.; which teaches an NID with a plurality of screw terminals but not a connector receptacle and functions of the connector receptacle involving connectorized and pre-connectorized optical cables;

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II. U.S. PGPub 2004/0228598 to Allen et al.; which teaches an interconnect cabinet with a termination panel;

III. U.S. Patent 5,745,633 to Giebel et al., which teaches a fiber optic assembly, but deals with coupling and splicing optical fibers with no connectors.

IV. U.S. Patent 5,870,515 to Ott et al., which teaches an optical fiber receptacle with multiple corresponding ferrules to fiber optic connector assembly.

V. U.S. Patent 6,661,961 to Allen et al., which teaches an NID with a connection interface but not a connector receptacle and functions of the connector receptacle involving connectorized and pre-connectorized optical cables.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Christopher Dremann on 22 February 2005.

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

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In accordance with discussions made in the telephone interview with the inventor's representative, Mr. Christopher Dremann on 22 February 2005, the following changes have been made:

Please amend the claims 26 and 27 to as follows:

Claim 26. A network interface device comprising:

- a housing comprising an external wall and defining an interior cavity;
- a drop cable opening formed through the external wall and defining a passageway for a pre-connectorized fiber optic drop cable into the interior cavity;
- a connector receptacle within the interior cavity for receiving the drop cable from the drop cable opening; and
- wherein the connector receptacle optically connects a connectorized optical fiber to the drop cable.

Claim 27. A network interface device comprising:

- a housing comprising an external wall and defining an interior cavity;
- a drop cable opening formed through the external wall and defining a passageway for a pre-connectorized fiber optic drop cable into the interior cavity;
- a connector receptacle within the interior cavity for receiving the drop cable;
- a service provider access door for preventing unauthorized access to the connector receptacle; and

wherein the connector receptacle optically connects a connectorized optical fiber to the drop cable.

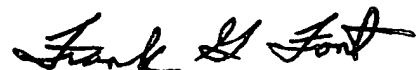
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Charlie Peng whose telephone number is (571) 272-2177. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am - 5 pm M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Frank Font can be reached on (571) 272-2415. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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